

Rama Adithya Varanasi

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<https://merama.github.io/> 

Research Statement

My research lies in Human Computer Interaction (HCI), where I study how day to day technologies are used for self-empowerment by working communities in marginal settings. In particular, I am interested in examining how collaboration between human and machine agents impact agency and motivation of workers. I plan to use my findings to design technological systems that focus on improving psychological wellbeing of working communities.

Research Areas

Human computer interaction • HCI4Development • human-machine collaboration • work communities • motivation • wellbeing • learning science • emerging markets

Education

- 2017-cur. **Ph.D**, Human Computer Interaction, *Cornell University*
Advisers: Dr. Nicola Dell & Dr. Tapan Parikh
- 2015-17 **M.S.**, Information Science, *Pennsylvania State University*
Adviser: Dr. John Carroll
CGPA: 3.89
- 2009-13 **B.Tech**, Information Technology, *SRM University*
CGPA: 3.96

Publications

PEER REVIEWED

- 2020 **Varanasi, R. A.**, Nicola Dell (2020). Examining the use of WhatsApp by teacher groups in Low-Income Indian Schools. *ACM Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI)*. [**under review**]
- 2019 **Varanasi, R. A.**, Rene Kezalcik & Nicola Dell (2019). How Teachers in India Reconfigure their Work Practices around Educational Technology Interventions. *Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction: Vol. 3, Issue CSCW, Article 220*. 2019.

- 2018 **Varanasi, R. A.**, Diccico, E., & Gambino, A. (2018). Facebook Reactions: Impact of Introducing New Features of SNS on Social Capital. *In International Conference on Human-Computer Interaction (pp. 444-451)*. Springer, Cham
- 2017 **Varanasi, R. A.**, Hanrahan, B. V., Wahid, S., & Carroll, J. M. (2017). TweetSight: Enhancing Financial Analysts' Social Media Use. *In Proceedings of the 8th International Conference on Social Media & Society (p. 22)*. ACM.

WORKSHOPS

- 2019 **Rama Adithya Varanasi**, & Nicola Dell. Understanding Technology Reconfiguration Practices by Teachers at the Margins of Intersectionality. *In Proceedings of the 2019 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems*.
- 2018 **Rama Adithya Varanasi**, Tapan Parikh, & Nicola Dell. Solidarity in Education: Organizations' Use of Technology to Support Low-income Schools. *In Proceedings of the 2017 ACM Conference on Computer Supported Cooperative Work and Social Computing (CSCW '17)*. ACM.
- 2018 Lim, S., **Varanasi, R. A.**, & Parikh, T. (2018, February). GLIDE (Git-Learning IDE; Integrated Development Environment): In-class Collaboration in Web Engineering Curriculum for Youths. *In Proceedings of the 49th ACM Technical Symposium on Computer Science Education (pp. 1112-1112)*. ACM.

Talks

- 2019 How Teachers in India Reconfigure their Work Practices around Educational Technology Interventions. *CSCW'19*
- 2016 Understanding the challenges with traditional design evaluation methodologies in after-school learning environments. *3rd International Rutgers's iconference, '16*

Grants, honors & awards

- 2018 Engaged Doctoral grant by *Cornell University*
- 2017 International research travel grant by *Einuadi Center for International Studies*.
- 2016 Student research grant by *Bloomberg Inc.*
- 2015 ACE award for outstanding performance and innovation by *Standard & Poor's*
- 2014 Changemaker of the year award for improving the education access to elementary schools by *Standard & Poor's*

Professional Experience

- May'13- July'15 UX Designer, *Standard & Poor's, India*.
Improved the customer experience of 12 financial modules in the Platform - a flagship financial analytic tool. Avg. user sessions increased by 3.4 mins.

Dec'12- UX Intern, *McGrawHill Financials, India*.
Mar'13 Improved workflows for Key Development and Business Intelligence segments. Improved turn around time of product data by 28%.

Teaching Experience

Jan'18- Project manager and coach for graduate level research projects
May'18 *Cornell University*

Jan'16- Instructor at summer web designing and development workshop
Jul'16 *Penn State University*

Jan'13- Teacher at Math & Science for low-income govt. school
May'15 *Teach for India*

Skills

METHODOLOGIES

Ethnographic methods • user research • wireframes • rapid prototyping • personas • user stories • scenario based design • usability testing • A/B testing.

PROGRAMMING

HTML, CSS & JS • Bootstrap • D3.js • JQuery • Ruby on Rails • Python • R

TOOLS

Adobe Photoshop • Adobe Illustrator • Adobe InDesign • Inkscape • Axure RP • Adobe XD • Miramatrix eye tracker • SPSS.